

## ABSTRACT

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2 Crushable gel beads 10 formed of an agar complex provide novel cosmetic,  
3 pharmaceutical, etc. delivery vehicles for topical delivery of biologically or  
4 cosmetically active agents. Preferred agar beads 10 are complexes of a  
5 continuous phase of agar gel 12 in a self-supporting solid or semi-solid form with  
6 a restraining polymer 14. Entrapped in and dispersed randomly throughout  
7 each agar bead 10 is a water-soluble, preferably polar, restraining polymer 14,  
8 preferably a quaternized cationic polymer, such as polyquaternium 24 or  
9 steardimonium hydroxyethylcellulose. Various active agents 16 may be bound  
10 to restraining polymer 14, for example ascorbic acid, lactic acid or papain.  
11 Methods of manufacture are also described.